United Nations A/70/765

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 February 2016

Original: English

Seventieth session
Agenda item 139
Human resources management

Mobility

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on mobility (A/70/254). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarifications, concluding with written responses received on 25 February 2016.

2. The report was submitted pursuant to resolution 68/265, by which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly annual reports on mobility until its seventy-second session. The report is the second annual report of the Secretary-General on mobility and updates his first annual report on mobility (A/69/190/Add.1). The Advisory Committee's comments and observations on his first report on mobility are contained in the related report of the Committee (A/69/572).

3. In paragraph 57 of its report, the Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in paragraphs 11, 16, 17 and 18 of its resolution 68/265, had requested the Secretary-General to provide certain data and information on mobility.

Update on mobility population

4. In his report (A/70/254), the Secretary-General states that the mobility and career development framework would apply to all internationally recruited staff of the Secretariat in the Field Service and Professional and higher categories, up to and including the D-2 level, holding fixed-term, continuing and permanent appointments, except those on non-rotational positions. As at 30 June 2014, the mobility population was composed of 14,197 Professional, Director and Field Service staff. For the political, peace and security network (POLNET), which was to be the first network to launch, in January 2016, there are 2,839 staff in the mobility population, and six non-rotational positions (4 P-5 and 2 P-4) have been identified to date (A/70/254, paras. 4-6, and table 1). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the complete list of non-rotational positions is unchanged from

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the provisional list of 109 positions contained in annex I to the Secretary-General's first annual report on mobility.

5. In paragraph 8 of his second report on mobility, the Secretary-General indicates that, with respect to the reconfiguration of the existing eight job networks, a new configuration had been approved by senior management and would be introduced globally across the Secretariat in the last quarter of 2015. The new configuration consists of 47 existing and new job families grouped into nine networks. **The Advisory Committee recalls that it had previously expressed its view on the list of non-rotational positions (see A/69/572, para. 78). The Committee notes that, with the new configuration, the previous list of 109 non-rotational positions would now correspond to nine, instead of eight, job networks. The Committee expects that the list of non-rotational positions will be kept under regular review to ensure that the positions correspond to the appropriate job network.**

Staff in D and E duty stations and their movement

6. In his report, the Secretary-General states that staff members continue to remain in the same category of duty station for extended periods, which could be especially problematic for staff in the most difficult categories of duty station (D and E), which are almost all non-family and where the living conditions are particularly challenging.[1] The updated data also shows that duty station movement tends to occur within the same duty station category (see A/70/254, paras. 9 and 11). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with two tables showing the number of staff in D and E duty stations as at 30 June 2014 who applied to positions through position-specific job openings and roster job openings in other categories between 1 January 2014 and 30 June 2015 and the number of those selected (see annex I). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide detailed and disaggregated information and analysis on duty station movement from D and E category duty stations in future reports on mobility.**

7. Table 2 of the report of the Secretary-General shows the number of staff in the mobility population as at 30 June 2014 who have spent more than five years in D or E category duty stations. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with information updated as at 30 June 2015 (see annex II). The Committee was also informed upon enquiry that a breakdown of the number of staff who have spent one, two, three and more years in D or E category duty stations was not possible at this time but could be included in future reports.

8. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in his future reports on mobility a breakdown of the number of staff who have spent one, two, three and more years in D and E category duty stations, in addition to the information on staff who have spent more than five years in D and E category duty stations. The Committee also reaffirms the need for complete and accurate data and information to be included in future reports of the Secretary-General on mobility (see A/69/572, para. 73).**

[1] The list of duty station classifications can be found in information circular ST/IC/2009/25.

9. **In this regard, the Advisory Committee recalls the pilot project for staff in peacekeeping operations and special political missions and recommends that the Secretary-General provide an update on the results of the pilot project to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, in order to evaluate the impact of the pilot project on staff in D and E duty stations (see A/69/572, para. 86).**

Data on staff moves and related costs

10. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that direct costs of mobility arise only when staff change duty stations and that such costs comprise recurrent costs, including the non-removal element and the mobility allowance, and one-time costs, including relocation grant, assignment grant and travel costs. He also states that under recurrent costs, payments totalling $11,330,226 were made to 1,254 staff members who moved in 2013 (A/70/254, paras. 13 and 17). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that of these 1,254 staff members, 986 made geographic moves, of which 212 were moves as a result of promotions and 774 lateral moves.

11. Regarding one-time costs, the Secretary-General states in his report that, in 2013, a total of $12,992,169 was spent for duty station moves between departments, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions in relation to 297 staff members. The one-time costs for duty station moves to or from field missions in 2013 amounted to $11,204,142 for 640 staff members who moved to and/or from 32 missions (A/70/254, paras. 18 and 19).

12. According to information contained in the report, the direct costs associated with duty station moves in 2013 between departments, offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions total $15.07 million and the field mission costs total $20.45 million, although not all costs are reflected in these figures. In respect of indirect costs, the report indicates that these are related primarily to the reconfiguration of the Inspira talent management tool to accommodate the new processes for the filling of vacancies and managed mobility, as well as to the establishment of network staffing teams, which both utilize existing resources and capacity (A/70/254, paras. 20, 22 and 23).

13. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in 2013, there were 774 lateral moves at an overall cost of $7,214,619, as compared with 2,070 lateral geographic moves in the two-year period from 2011-2012, at a combined cost of $17,301,792. In paragraph 65 of its report, the Committee notes the discrepancy in the current data and the data provided in the previous report of the Secretary-General on mobility (A/69/190/Add.1). The Committee was also provided with table 1, set out below, which shows the lateral geographic moves for each period broken down by job network.

Table 1
Lateral geographic moves by job network

Job Network	*2011-2012*	*2013*
MAGNET	889	300
POLNET	465	201
SAFETYNET	289	77
ECONET	166	90
ITECNET	148	51
INFONET	55	17
LEGALNET	28	20
CONFERENCENET	24	9
Not applicable	6	9
Total	**2 070**	**774**

Abbreviations: CONFERENCENET, conference services network; ECONET, economic and social development network; INFONET, public information and external relations network; ITECNET, information and communications network; LEGALNET, legal network; MAGNET, management and operations support network; POLNET, political, peace and security network; SAFETYNET, internal security and safety network.

14. **The Advisory Committee reiterates the importance of establishing the criteria for determining a viable comparative baseline against which future mobility trends can be measured, particularly in view of the required cap on the number of geographic moves as set out in paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 68/265 (see A/69/572, para. 66). In this regard, the Committee is of the view that independent verification by an external body such as the Board of Auditors of the data on the annual numbers of geographic moves and their costs and of the establishment of a baseline would be useful in assessing the impact of implementation of the mobility framework and in determining costs. Since POLNET was to have launched in January 2016, the Committee considers that the baseline should be determined, as a matter of urgency, for consideration by the Assembly no later than during the main part of its seventieth session.**

External recruitment

15. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2014, there were 3,768 external appointments, the total annual number of which ranged from 637 to 857, representing 30 to 40 per cent of all job opportunities for selection. These were comprised of 3,046 external appointments in the Professional category, 541 in the Field Service category and 181 at the Director level (A/70/254, para. 27). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that current data showed that the number of external appointments per year remained within a comparable range. The Committee was also provided with table 2, set out below, showing the percentage of external appointments from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2014. The Committee requested information on whether there was an overlap in terms of the reported data concerning the number of staff moves referred to in paragraph 13

above and the number of internal and external appointments, but did not receive a clear response.

Table 2
Proportion of internal and external appointments from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2014

Period	*Internal appointments*	*External appointments*	*Total appointments*	*External appointments (Percentage)*
1 July 2009-30 June 2010	1 314	813	2 127	38
1 July 2010-30 June 2011	1 638	857	2 495	34
1 July 2011-30 June 2012	1 912	795	2 707	29
1 July 2012-30 June 2013	1 415	637	2 052	31
1 July 2013-30 June 2014	1 197	666	1 863	36

16. The Advisory Committee reiterates that efforts to encourage internal mobility should not have a negative impact on efforts to reinvigorate the Organization through external appointments (A/69/572, para. 77). In this context, the Committee notes that table 2 above relates to periods prior to the implementation of the mobility framework, and looks forward to receiving similar data on moves and on internal and external appointments for subsequent periods, in order to assess the impact of mobility on external appointments. The Committee also recalls that the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General, when considering applicants for vacancies, to give equal treatment to internal and external candidates (see resolution 68/265, para. 10). In this regard, the Committee also considers that improvements could be made to Inspira to make it more user-friendly and to ensure equal access to external candidates.

Filling of posts under the mobility framework

17. The process for the filling of posts under the mobility framework is set out in paragraphs 32 to 39 of the report of the Secretary-General. In this regard, the Secretary-General proposes that the advertising time for posts that are part of the semi-annual staffing exercises be reduced from 60 to 30 days, so that it would take around 150 days to fill vacancies, in order to make further progress towards achieving the 120-day target for recruitment previously set by the General Assembly. The advertising time for posts in job networks not yet launched under the framework would remain at 60 days.

18. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in reviewing the entire process, the advertisement period had been identified as a potential area for achieving efficiencies, in order to ensure that the six-month time frame for the completion of the semi-annual process is met and to make even further progress towards the 120-day goal for the filling of vacant positions established by the General Assembly. The Committee was further informed that, on the basis of data analysis, the largest volume of applications are received at the beginning and at the end of the posting period and that more candidates apply during the first half of the posting period than during the second half. The Committee was also informed that, under the framework, there would be a predictable cycle for the issuance of post

announcements, and potential applicants would therefore know in advance when posts in particular job networks would be advertised and when the application window would close, with advertising periods clearly indicated.

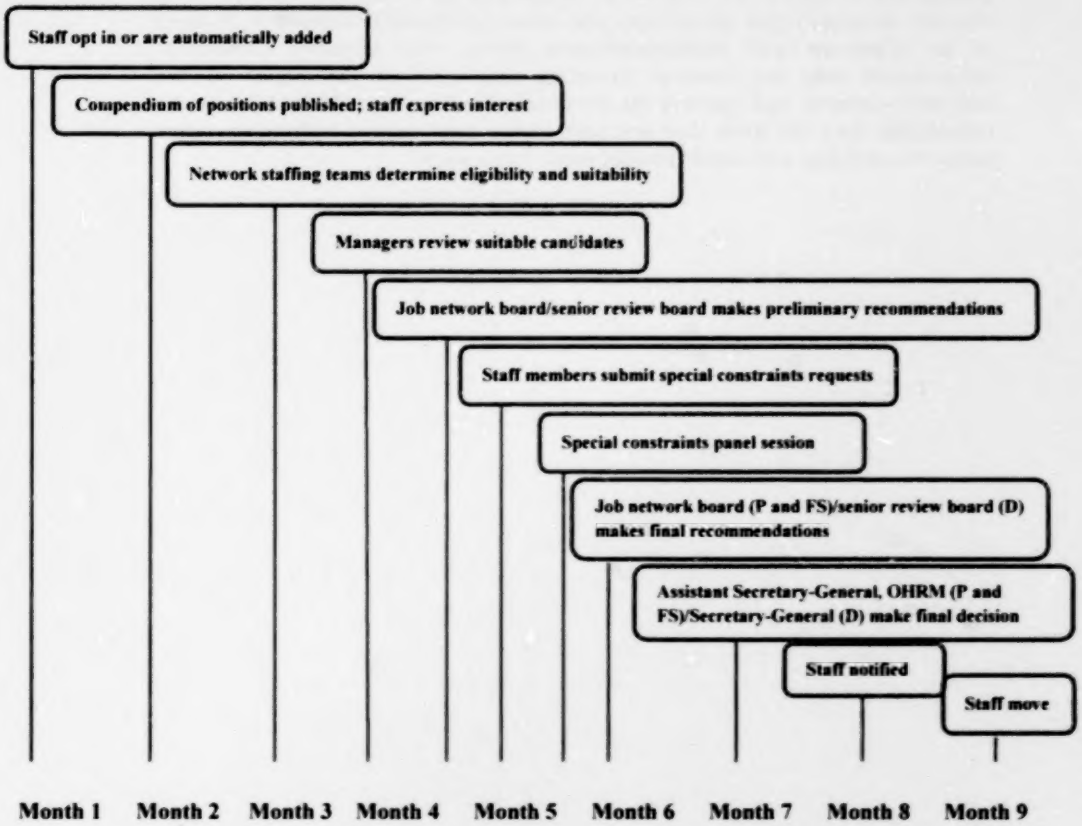
19. **While the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal to reduce from 60 to 30 days the advertising time for posts that are part of the semi-annual staffing exercises under the mobility and career development framework, it also recommends that the implementation of this measure be kept under review and be included in future mobility reports to the General Assembly. The Committee notes that the proposal relates only to posts within the mobility framework. The Committee also considers that there should be more clarity in the terminology used in the reports of the Secretary-General referring to posts subject to mobility.**

Organizational process under the mobility framework

20. The staffing process under the mobility framework is set out in paragraphs 40 to 46 of the report of the Secretary-General. Staff members would be able to express interest in a minimum of three positions in the compendium and must select one position at a duty station other than their current duty station (provided that the compendium includes such a position). Subject matter experts in the network staffing teams would conduct an evaluation, and a list of suitable candidates for each position would then be transmitted to the managers of the positions for their input. Subsequently, the network staffing teams would draw up a list of preliminary matches for each position and submit the list to the associated job network boards for positions in the Professional and Field Service categories, or to the senior review board for Director-level positions. The boards would review the preliminary matches and make preliminary lateral move recommendations.

21. In his report, the Secretary-General states that staff members who have been recommended to move to a position in which they did not express an interest would be contacted to ascertain their ability to take up the position. He also states that those who feel that they are unable to move may submit a request to the special constraints panel, under the following categories: medical reasons; compelling personal circumstances; and matters in the interest of the Organization. Finally, the findings of the special constraints panel would be taken into consideration by the job network boards and the senior review board when making their final lateral move recommendations to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management or the Secretary-General, respectively. More details on the roles and functions of these staffing bodies are provided in paragraphs 53 to 59 of the report. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with the figure set out below, which shows the timeline by month for the managed mobility process. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide information on the exemptions granted on the basis of the findings of the special constraints panel in future reports on mobility, including information on the panel's working procedures and the rationale for its findings.**

Figure
Monthly timeline of staffing process under managed mobility


Staff opt in or are automatically added
Compendium of positions published; staff express interest
Network staffing teams determine eligibility and suitability
Managers review suitable candidates
Job network board/senior review board makes preliminary recommendations
Staff members submit special constraints requests
Special constraints panel session
Job network board (P and FS)/senior review board (D) makes final recommendations
Assistant Secretary-General, OHRM (P and FS)/Secretary-General (D) make final decision
Staff notified
Staff move
Month 1
Month 2
Month 3
Month 4
Month 5
Month 6
Month 7
Month 8
Month 9

Abbreviations: D, Director; FS, Field Service; OHRM, Office of Human Resources Management; P, Professional.

22. In his report, the Secretary-General states that the framework will be implemented in a phased manner by job network, with the POLNET network the first to launch in 2016, followed by the other eight networks in a sequence to be determined. In addition, the core POLNET network staffing team, the POLNET job network board, the senior review board and the special constraints panel would be established in the last quarter of 2015. The first managed mobility exercise for POLNET staff was to have begun in January 2016, while the first job openings exercise for the network would begin in April 2016 with the publication of the vacancy compendium. Furthermore, staff are expected to move or be onboarded in August 2016 and October 2016, respectively. Both parts of the second semi-annual staffing exercise are expected to begin in July 2016 (A/70/254, paras. 65 and 66). **The Advisory Committee looks forward to receiving information on the first managed mobility exercise for the POLNET network, including lessons learned, in the next mobility report of the Secretary-General.**

Conclusion

23. The General Assembly is requested to take note of the report of the Secretary-General and to approve the proposal to reduce from 60 to 30 days the advertising time for vacancies under the mobility and career development framework. **Subject to its comments and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the report of the Secretary-General and approve the proposal to reduce from 60 to 30 days the advertising time for posts that are part of the semi-annual staffing exercises under the mobility and career development framework.**

Annex I

Table 1
Position-specific job openings at the Field Service and Professional categories and at the Director level

Posting year	*Hardship category of job opening*	*Number of job openings posted*	*Total number of applicants*	*Number of applicants from D or E category duty stations*	*Number of selections of applicants from D or E category duty stations*
2014[a]	H	673	182 094	4 939	10
	A	107	18 005	552	3
	B	189	40 501	1 109	1
	C	40	4 763	263	7
2014 total		**1 009**	**245 363**	**6 863**	**21**
2015[b]	H	209	64 600	1,836	3
	A	39	6 489	252	0
	B	61	13 677	527	2
	C	11	1 699	72	1
2015 total		**320**	**86 465**	**2 687**	**6**
Total[c]		**1 329**	**331 828**	**9 550**	**27**

[a] Staff mobility population in D or E category duty stations as at 30 June 2014.
[b] For the period from 1 January to 30 June 2015 only. Data for the second half of 2015 is not yet available.
[c] For 2014 and the period from 1 January to 30 June 2015.

Table 2
Recruit-from-roster job openings at the FS, P and D levels

Posting year	*Hardship category of job opening*	*Number of job openings posted*	*Total number of applicants*	*Number of applicants from D or E category duty stations*	*Number of selections of applicants from D or E category duty stations*
2014[a]	H	20	1 809	157	3
	A	12	1 890	145	2
	B	104	17 934	1 717	34
	C	217	21 588	2 459	58
2014 total		**353**	**43 221**	**4 478**	**97**
2015[b]	H	5	584	89	1
	A	11	1,066	108	1
	B	46	7,198	615	10
	C	56	5,024	571	15

Posting year	*Hardship category of job opening*	*Number of job openings posted*	*Total number of applicants*	*Number of applicants from D or E category duty stations*	*Number of selections of applicants from D or E category duty stations*
2015 total		**118**	**13 872**	**1 383**	**27**
Total[c]		**471**	**57 093**	**5 861**	**124**

[a] Staff mobility population in D or E duty stations as at 30 June 2014.
[b] 1 January to 30 June 2015 only. Data for the second half of 2015 is not yet available.
[c] For 2014 and 1 January to 30 June 2015.

Annex II

Table 3
Proportion of staff in the mobility population as at 30 June 2015 who have spent more than five years in D and/or E category duty stations

	Mobility population as at 30 June 2015		*Number of staff at D or E category duty stations*[a]		*Number of staff who have spent five years or more at D and/or E category duty stations*		*Percentage of staff at D or E category duty stations who have spent five years or more those duty stations*	
Category	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*
Director	460	202	64	19	28	7	44	37
Professional	5 634	4 021	973	343	567	181	58	53
Field Service	2 826	1 114	1 726	593	1 085	343	63	58
Total	**8 920**	**5 337**	**2 763**	**955**	**1 680**	**531**	**61**	**56**

[a] Only staff with five years of continuous service in the Secretariat with no separations were considered. Staff on temporary contracts, in tribunals or in posts administered by the United Nations Development Programme were excluded.